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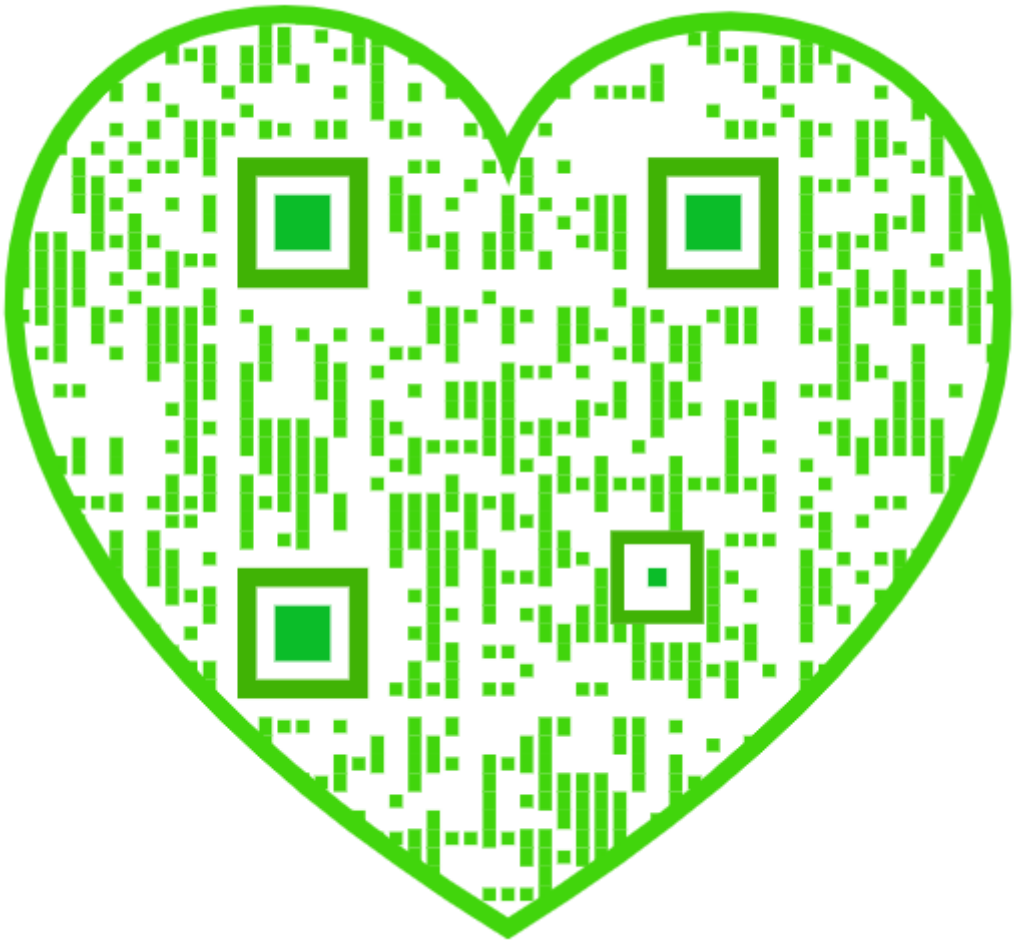

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EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE BOY SCOUTS

By

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DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

[Advance sheets from the Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1918–1920.]

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EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE BOY SCOUTS.

By Lorne W. Barclay,

Director of the Department of Education, Boy Scouts of America.

Contents.—Scouting and the schools—Scouting and citizenship—The pioneer scout—Seascouting, a branch of the Boy Scouts of America—National Councils endeavor to discover vital facts in regard to the boyhood of the Nation—International aspects of scouting—Scout handbooks, organs, and other literature—Motion pictures for boys.

SCOUTING AND THE SCHOOLS.

Scouting continues to enjoy the cordial indorsement of school men everywhere all over the country. More and more those interested are coming to see the enormous possibilities of cooperation between the scout movement and the schools. Many schools now give credit for scout work done outside of the schools. Many more are in hearty sympathy with the program as an extraschool activity.

In 1919 there were organized in connection with public schools 1,942 troops and 170 in connection with private schools. The records also show that for the same year 1,623 scoutmasters were also school-teachers. Many troops have their meetings in the school buildings and in turn render good service by taking charge of fire drills, first aid and safety first instruction, yard clean ups, flag drills, etc.

Scout leaders take the utmost pains to see that scout activities do not in any way interfere with school duties, and troop meetings are regularly held on Friday evening for that reason. The best results have been obtained not by formalizing scouting, but by supplementing and vitalizing the book work by the practical activities of the scout program. Through scouting many a boy's healthy curiosity to know has been whetted, so that he comes for perhaps the first time in his life to see "sense" in books. As one school man has said, "Scouting has done what no other system yet devised has done—made the boy *want to learn*."

The National Education Association, meeting in Chicago in 1919, had a special scouting section which was particularly helpful, interesting, and conducive to closer cooperation between the scout movement and the public schools.

The department of education of the National Council is at present engaged in working out the development of a national policy governing the relations between scouting and the schools, for important and

successful as the work has hitherto been, it is believed that only the very outskirts of the possible fields of mutual helpfulness have yet been reached.

SCOUTING AND CITIZENSHIP.

The making of good citizens is one of the chief aims of the scout movement. Everything in its program contributes directly and indirectly to this end. Every boy who associates himself with the movement is impressed with a sense of personal responsibility. If he sees a heap of rubbish that might cause a fire or collect disease-carrying germs, he is taught to report these traps to the proper authorities without delay. He is enlisted in every movement for community betterment and good health. Scouts are organized for service and have participated in hundreds of city-clean-up and city-beautiful, and "walk-rite" campaigns. They fight flies and mosquitoes and fever-carrying rats. They assist forest wardens and park commissioners in preserving and protecting trees and planting new ones. They help the police in handling traffic in crowded conditions, as in parades, fairs, etc., and work with fire departments in spreading public information as to fire prevention, as well as actively participating in cooperation with fire brigades.

All this means the making of an intelligent, alert, responsible citizenry, dedicated to being helpful to all people at all times, to keep themselves physically strong, mentally awake, morally straight, to do their duty to God and country.

THE PIONEER SCOUT.

In order that boys who live in remote country districts may enjoy the benefits of the scout training, even though it is not possible for them to join a regular troop, the Pioneer Division of the Boy Scouts of America has been established. Pioneer Scouts follow the same program as other scouts do, taking their tests from a specially appointed local examiner, usually a teacher, pastor, or employer. On January 31, 1920, there were 758 active Pioneer Scouts on record at national headquarters. Much interest has been manifested in this branch of scouting, which has been found to fill a real need among country boys. The State agricultural departments and colleges have given generous aid and indorsement, as have also the Grange, Antituberculosis League, and other local institutions. The United States Department of Agriculture is also lending its hearty support and indorsement to this branch of scout work. The Secretary of Agriculture, the Hon. E. T. Meredith, says: "The Boy Scout program fits in with the work of the rural school, the rural church, the agricultural boys' club, and other rural welfare organizations. They should go hand in hand."

SCOUTING AND AMERICANIZATION.

Mr. James E. West, Chief Scout Executive, makes the following statement in his tenth annual report rendered to the National Council, Boy Scouts of America:

The tremendous value of the Boy Scout movement in the Americanization problems of this country has been recognized by the division of citizenship training, Bureau of Naturalization, Department of Labor, from whom was received a request that Boy Scouts distribute letters and cards among aliens in the interest of the educational work of the division of citizenship training. A study of the indorsements of the movement by national leaders (selected from the many received) will reveal similar recognition in such quarters. Many leaders in the organization, from coast to coast, have long recognized that the Boy Scouts of America enjoy a high privilege as well as a high responsibility in truly democratizing the boyhood of this country.

The foreign-born boy and the son of foreign-born parents sit side by side with native-born boys (as they should) in our schools. They mingle in their play and in their homes. They are one boyhood. But it is a boyhood of marvelously diverse racial characteristics and tendencies. Moreover, this boyhood is the future manhood of America. And the boy inside each individual in this 8,000,000 or so of American youth instinctively responds to the Boy Scout program. As America is the melting pot of the nations, even so scouting is the melting pot of the boys of the nations.

Fortunately, the program needs no modifications or special manipulation to "Americanize" its followers. It is inherently an Americanizing program. In Manhattan's crowded East Side, since 1912, when the first scout troop was founded there, thousands of boys have taken the Scout Oath and Law and followed its principles and lived its out-of-door life. To-day there are 25 troops in New York City, numbering 800 boys. Every scoutmaster and assistant scoutmaster in the district is an ex-scout. These troops have a splendid record of war-service work, and it has been declared of them that they were the greatest single agency in operation rightly to interpret the war to their foreign-born neighbors.

The aggressive introduction of scouting into all our industrial sections, the enlistment of the men of those sections (who are eligible) as local council members, troop committeemen, scoutmasters, the fullest possible round of scouting activities for the men and the boys in this country who do not yet know America, but aspire to be her sons, will help to solve all our industrial problems and preserve our national ideals and institutions.

SEA SCOUTING—A BRANCH OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

Sea scouting is another important branch of scouting which aims to develop water scouting and nautical activities and training of all sorts. Chief Sea Scout James A. Wilder says:

Sea scouting is the way whereby scouting fulfills its obligation to the American boy to prepare him for emergencies on water as well as on land. High officials of the Navy and the merchant marine have expressed their unqualified approval of the entire program of seamanship, watermanship, cloud study, sailmaking, boats under oars and sail, shore camping, and the other fascinating activities. Our merchant marine languishes for lack of instructed seamen. It is not a far cry to the time when boys who have followed the seascout program will be

found in the four quarters of the globe, doing business on great waters because they, as sea scouts, received the same training which helped keep our flag flying on the seven seas.

During the year 1919 the sea scouting department tripled its membership and had regularly commissioned ships in 19 States. It is essentially an older-boy plan and is not a substitute for scouting but a development of it. Only boys over 15 years of age are eligible to join a sea scout ship, though a preliminary rank, that of Cabin Boy, is open to younger scouts who are able to meet certain tests in "water preparedness" and take the Sea Promise.

THE SEA PROMISE.

On my honor, I will, as a scout and as a cabin boy, do my best to become proficient in scouting.

1. To learn swimming and always "be prepared" to render aid to those in need in connection with water accidents.
2. To make it my practice to know the location of the life-saving devices aboard every boat I go on, and to outline mentally any responsibility in maintaining order for myself and shipmates in case of emergency.
3. To be vigilant and cautious, always guarding against water accidents.
4. To cooperate with the responsible authorities for the observance of all regulations for the conduct and safety of boats and ever seek to preserve the motto of the sea, "Women and Children First."

Like all scouting, sea scouting is both recreation and education. A sea scout has a jolly good time in the water and on it, but at the same time he is acquiring a tremendous amount of practical knowledge and nautical efficiency which will stand him in good stead whether he follows the sea or not.

NATIONAL COUNCIL'S ENDEAVOR TO DISCOVER VITAL FACTS IN REGARD TO THE BOYHOOD OF THE NATION.

Earnest search reveals the lack of any comprehensive and uniform data as to the youth of the Nation, although such data are absolutely essential if we are to reach every boy and assure him the educational and other opportunities to which he is entitled. At the instigation of the chief scout executive, Mr. James E. West, the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America is endeavoring to start in motion an aggressive campaign in the ascertaining and collecting of such facts. Each local council is charged with the responsibility of studying conditions in its own locality. Realizing the importance of making this study of nation-wide extension, the National Council, at its last annual meeting (March, 1920), passed the following resolution:

Whereas the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America regard it of the utmost importance that there should be available for use by the Boy Scouts of America and other organizations interested in the welfare of the youth of the Nation all possible data relating to this subject; and

Whereas investigation has proved that practically no uniform data of this sort are at present available as a basis for a thorough study of the situation and further development of their respective programs for service to the youth of our Nation:

Resolved, That the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America in tenth annual meeting now assembled requests that the Federal Government and the various States of the United States shall, at their earliest conveniences, through their various appropriate departments, collate and make available for our use and that of other organizations such data as will provide intelligent, efficient, and economic promotion of the program devoted to making of good citizenship, and

Be it further resolved, That the United States Bureau of Education, Census Bureau, and the Department of Child Welfare be especially urged to collate such data as are absolutely necessary for a thorough investigation of the problems involved; and

Be it further resolved, That if sufficient funds are not at the present time available for this absolutely essential purpose, the Congress of the United States and the legislatures of the various States of the Union be urged to immediately make such appropriation as may be necessary for carrying out this purpose.

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF SCOUTING.

Scouting as a world movement was represented in the summer of 1920 by the International Scout Jamboree held at London, England, at which delegates were present from 34 of the 53 nations in which scouting is definitely established. The Boy Scouts of America were represented by a group of about 250 scouts and scout leaders representing the whole country. The gathering was most interesting and impressive in every way, and the value of the scout movement in training boys to healthful, useful activities by a program which is both educational and recreational was triumphantly demonstrated. Aside from their participation in the jamboree itself, the trip was of immense value to our own boys, as it allowed of extensive visiting of points of interest and historic association both in England and France, and in Belgium, where the delegation was reviewed by King Albert, of Belgium.

At the invitation of the American Committee for Devastated France, the National Council loaned its department of education director, Mr. Lorne W. Barclay, to be in charge of the scout camp at Compiegne, France, on the bank of the Aisne.

SCOUT HANDBOOKS, ORGANS, AND OTHER LITERATURE.

Handbook for Boys.—The Handbook for Boys continues to be increasingly in demand. Two or three printings of the book are required annually, each printing including a 1,000,000 edition, to supply the demand for what is said to be the most popular boy's book in the world. It is now in its twenty-fourth edition and is the official interpretation of the scout movement.

Leaders' handbooks.—The new Scoutmaster's Handbook contains a wealth of valuable material for scout leaders and other adults interested in the movement. It is prepared by experts and based upon sound pedagogical principles as well as good scouting. The new handbook for executives, called Community Boy Leadership, is now in circulation and is proving valuable.

Magazines.—Boy's Life, the official scout magazine for boys, is a live, wholesome, interesting publication issued monthly, containing stories and articles by well-known authors and specialists.

Scouting, issued monthly, is prepared especially for scout leaders not under council, while The Scout Executive, another monthly bulletin, is directed chiefly to the field under council.

Merit Badge pamphlets.—The editorial department of the Boy Scouts of America has prepared and edited a series of valuable pamphlets in connection with the Merit Badge subjects, which is filling a long-felt want among scouts and others interested. There are 68 different pamphlets, each written by a recognized authority in the respective subject, and each submitted before printing to a large number of experts, over 500 of whom were consulted for critical suggestion and guidance. No effort has been spared to make these booklets accurate and interesting. They contain over 3,000 pages of printed matter and over 800 illustrations, as well as valuable bibliographies and biographical matter. The pamphlets have already attracted considerable favorable notice among school men, and several colleges are placing the whole series in their reference libraries.

A classified list of the subjects for which pamphlets have been issued follows:

I. *Subjects that have to do with outdoor activities.*

1. Angling.
2. Archery.
3. Camping.
4. Cooking.
5. Cycling.
6. Hiking.
7. Horsemanship.
8. Marksmanship.
9. Pathfinding.
10. Photography.
11. Pioneering.
12. Seamanship.
13. Stalking.
14. Swimming.

II. *Subjects that have to do with outdoor activities of a vocational nature.*

1. Agriculture.
2. Beekeeping.
3. Bird study.
4. Botany.
5. Conservation.
6. Dairying.
7. Forestry.
8. Gardening.
9. Poultry keeping.
10. Taxidermy.

III. *Subjects which have to do with modern application of mechanics.*

1. Automobiling.
2. Aviation.
3. Electricity.
4. Machinery.
5. Signaling.
6. Wireless.

IV. *Subjects which have to do with the preservation of health and the saving of life.*

1. Athletics.
2. First Aid.
3. First Aid to Animals.
4. Firemanship.
5. Life Saving.
6. Personal Health.
7. Physical Development.
8. Public Health.
9. Safety First.

V. *Subjects which have to do with so-called "Trades."*

1. Blacksmithing.
2. Carpentry.
3. Craftsmanship, including Craftswork in Metal, Leather, Basketry, Pottery, Cement, Bookbinding, Wood Carving. (7 separate pamphlets.)
4. Handicraft.
5. Leather working.
6. Masonry.
7. Mining.
8. Plumbing.
9. Printing.
10. Surveying.

VI. *Subjects which have to do with knowledge gained mainly from books and laboratories, under instructors.*

1. Astronomy.
2. Chemistry.
3. Business.
4. Civics.
5. Interpreting.
6. Scholarship.

VII. *Subjects which have to do with some form of art.*

1. Architecture.
2. Art.
3. Music (including Bugling).
4. Painting.
5. Sculpture.

Other literature.—The National Council also issues a large number of other informational and interpretative publications, such as the Manual of Customs and Drills, The Seascout Manual, What Every Scoutmaster Wants to Know, Scouting and the Public Schools, Your Boy and Scouting, What Scouts Do, Membership in the Boy Scouts of America, The Boy Scout Movement (as approved by the Religious Education Association), etc.

Cooperation with publishers.—The department during the year has maintained through its director constant contact with publishers and authors. More than 100 new books published for boys in 1919 have been carefully examined (a good many in manuscript form) for review in Boys' Life or inclusion in some one of our book lists and, of these, of the few really good books for boys published in 1919, it is a joy to report that more than half of these were first published serially in Boys' Life, a record that stands alone.

New books edited.—The director has edited as usual the Boy Scouts' Year Book, compiled from last year's issues of Boys' Life, the sales of which have been more than a third larger than in previous years. More notable still has been the success of the Boy Scouts' Book of Stories, a compilation of stories of interest to boys selected, one each, from the writings of our best American and English short-story writers. The purpose of the director in editing such a book was to interest boys in stories that have the quality of fine writing, and so help to develop in them a taste for literature that will make them lovers of the great and good books of all ages. The very nature of the book warranted the conclusion that it would take considerable time to make it a good seller. Once again the unexpected has happened in that the first year's sales of the Boy Scouts' Book of Stories has equaled the first year's sale of the Boy Scouts' Year Book, and the present promise is that for years to come this

book will more than hold its own. In the coming year material is being gathered for a companion volume to be published under the title the Boy Scouts' Book of Stories in Verse.

Motion pictures for scouts.—The director of the library department of the National Council, Mr. Franklin K. Matthews, has served as a literary adviser to a motion-picture company. As a result of this collaboration a large number of educational and scout films have been put into circulation, including the popular "Knights of the Square Table," by Chief Seascout James A. Wilder. It is believed that these films offer splendid opportunities not only to show the educational possibilities of the scout movement but also to interest and instruct the public in the joys and benefits of outdoor life, the necessity for safety first and fire-prevention measures, and other features which are accentuated by the scout program. The films can also be admirably used in connection with the Americanization movement.

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